

it'll all end in tears

korrupt yr self
issue #3

also featuring:
New Idea Society
Damien's Opus #2
plus record reviews and other fun stuff

Korrupt Yr Self
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Can I tell you, I hate the snow? It reminds me of your cold. Perhaps I've been a jerk, but we all make mistakes. I tried too hard anyway. If I could change just one damn thing, believe me, I wouldn't.

it was a Burnside ride...

1.

I've never really understood women. That is, I've never been very good at romantic relationships with women. I've had a lot of friends who are women. This seems to be a reoccurring theme in my life actually. When I was 12, that age when boys and girls stop thinking each other are icky and start doing that interstellar dance where they try to find out about each other, I didn't do as well as some of my friends in merging from friends to kissing partners, but thus I did meet some really cool people. So began my life in the friend zone.

There are the exceptions of a few turns down Relationship Avenue. At 32 though, I don't even know how those turns happened and whether I pursued them or not. I guess in my own way I did, but I don't really remember making a conscientious decision.

Somewhere everything life is. would all certainly weird when someone that your something really be thought was



along the lines you fuck up. That's just the way Someone once said this end in tears and they weren't mistaken. It's you think you put else first, and it ends up just trying to hold on to that may or may not there. What you there, it's not what was

there. What was there was even better, but you were too busy grabbing at someone else's brass rings. That's when you realized you really fucked up. It all ends in tears.

...where I laced my leg with ink...

2.

Michael Jackson died recently. Since that happened the news media has been talking a lot about a pop star who hasn't been musically relevant in over two decades. In all this dialog no one really seems to be talking about why Michael Jackson was Michael Jackson and how he became Michael Jackson. I wonder if that dialog will ever occur. People often become what they are through the shape of others actions. Michael Jackson may very well never have been Michael Jackson had his father not been an abusive psychotic asshole. had he grown up in a safe, nurturing and loving environment then the name Michael Jackson might not be on the tip of our tongues. He probably wouldn't be dead right now either.

Would anyone have cared about this man if he hadn't sung "Thriller"? Would he even have felt the need to closet himself inside "Neverland" since his mid twenties? Would he have been the figure of intrigue to literally billions of people? Probably not. No doubt the kid could sing and dance. But he was a minstrel for a global public that really didn't give a shit about the human being or where he came from.

So now there is no more freak in a fishbowl for the world to gawk at. Well at least not in Michael Jackson. We've certainly replaced him over the decades with many heroes of idol worship. We are quick to erect alters and of course we are quick to tear them down as they rocket from the sea of averages into household name. Michael Jackson, he reached the lexicon of billions of lives through song and

dance and we gave him a lot of finger pointing, name calling and drove him into public seclusion.

The world turns on it's axis without Michael Jackson now. Me personally, I'm not really sad. I don't have any real emotion about him. I liked him as a six year old, before I could find my own art and artists that spoke to me. I was too young at the height of his popularity to feel any nostalgia as his face flashes all over the television and his songs emulate from every radio station known to human kind. It just makes me wonder about the values of the country I live in. I wonder if the dialog is any different anywhere else in the world? This is somehow an

international event after all. Are people all over the world mourning the superstar or the man? There's a warm grave for a man in Los Angeles now. And while there are tears to be shed, I am not sure they make that much sense.



Frodus – Swedish Columbia

...to remind me of you and what we used to do...

3.

I've never met a president of the United States. I've lived in the suburbs of Washington DC for twenty years now and not once have I ever rubbed shoulders with the Commander in Chief. I'm not really sure if this is a normal thing or not. Most people that live in this area are from somewhere else. I was from somewhere else before my parents moved out here in 1989. We moved here for the same reason everyone moves here, for a better opportunity for one of my parents. Most people who live here don't stay very long. They get their experience or enact their prowess on government to push their policy or agenda, fill out there resume and then leave. Either that or they work for the military complex that grows and grows and grows like mold on fruit. When you take the metro from my suburban abode into the District you have to stop at the Pentagon metro stop. They have direct marketing advertising from places like Boeing and Lockheed Martin toting the latest in missile defense technology. There are probably like five guys in the entire government that are authorized to buy this crap. I wonder what the fuck the budget meetings are like for these ad campaigns. Washington DC is a very strange place indeed.

It is these same advertisements, glowing mightily at all hours of the day underground that has got me thinking a lot lately (again). DC kind of sucks when it comes to culture. I mean that in very specific, home grown, social culture. We have a lot of cultures mulling about and co-mingling in their divided unity. Every aspect of this planet is represented in one way or another in the united diamond district. But when it comes to home grown, city identity we have nothing. In the past DC grew punk rock bands known about the planet, and we have go-go music, which is unique to our four corners, but aside from the federal government we aren't known for anything. Food? No, we don't have anything culinary specific that we can call our own. Sure there is the Chili Bowl, but you can get hamburgers anywhere. The half smoke they make isn't called The District Half Smoke like the Philly Cheese Steak or New York Pizza. We don't have the luxury of having a hometown brew, which saddens me seeing as though we are the nations capital. I can't sip on the sweet barley soda made in my hometown.

We do have some small pockets. I've been frequenting Madam's Organ a lot more lately. By a lot I mean I've been there twice in six weeks. But that place is pretty awesome, a hole in the wall to end all hole in the walls, because it's world renowned as one of the best music venues in the world. The "new" 9:30 club may be state of the art but it pales in comparison to Madam's. Red heads apparently get half off on Rolling Rocks too. But as destinations go, it's a place to see music and get drunk. It's not giving the world anything new. Nameless jazz, funk and blues gets played there. The whole scene is quite enjoyable, but were not giving birth to anyone's career here. Unlike New York where any boring shit with Garageband and a keyboard can get coverage and suddenly get their album downloaded 5,000 times on Pirate Bay. Since that's what operates as culture these days.

Maybe it's all just part of a bigger problem in Washington DC. We are trying to be more and more like New York. I saw a Hot Chocolate bar recently. What kind of specialty bullshit is that? It was framed against the ever increasing crop of shitty art galleries on 14th street. It all seems so out of place to me, especially because Ramrod's and Dakota Cowgirl both closed. How can you ape the big apple if you can't even keep a gay night club and bar open in your upscale sheik part of town? And why are we trying to be like New York anyway? New York doesn't really give to the rest of the world anyway. They swallow talent, horde it and let nothing break free of that small island. When are gallery artists going to take their art to middle America? Fucking snooty fuckers always talk about how average American's aren't smart enough to "get" their "art". Why not bring the art to them? This country is filled from one end to the other with dying towns. There are a million possibilities out there. Take a hint from the world of Skateboarding and bring the world to the people. There are concrete parks being built all over the great mid-west, exposing kids to the world on four wheels beneath your feet.

So I've never met a President. I've met one representative from Missouri and saw a future presidential candidate give the commencement speech at my Alma Mater. One time Bill Clinton spoke at the elementary school in my neighborhood. I had to show ID to the secret service just to get to my own house, walking through the grounds of the campus. This is what living in this town means. Inconvenience at the hands of our own monarchs.

I live in DC because I never had a desire to leave when I was young. I loved it here. We had the best bands, the best the world had to offer. But all that has changed as I've grown older. Or at least I've grown away from it. That was the culture I loved. But it seems to have faded out. Or I just got older, grumpier, jaded, tired. These things happen. Some things never change. Now I think about leaving all the time, but I have no idea where to go. I sit up on Friday nights, suffering from insomnia, typing up bullshit on my computer. What a life. I guess it'll all end in tears.



Strip Mall Ballads - WDC

...and how we kissed, under the stars, stayed up in my car,
and listened to the Cure...

4.

I've been reading Burn Collector: Collected Stories Issues 1-9 by the King of Insomnia Al Burian. Today this is especially appropriate because I have been suffering now for two days due to the effects of sleep deprivation. This morning it felt pretty good, and that's where I go the idea for writing this. Now I just feel really ill. My head is kind of hurting. I feel a combined sense of tiredness and jittery. It's going to be a long day. I hope to get my wits about me. I probably won't though.

This all started Friday afternoon. This is now Sunday, late morning when I write this. Friday was July 2nd that dreaded day before the holidays. Work was not going to happen on my part and it mostly did not happen. That afternoon I was to join some co-workers to celebrate a birthday with bar and restaurant hoping in the good ole District of Columbia. The fun started at lunch for me with a tall glass of beer. The drinking continued, regularly (not really steadily) until about 2 PM when the parties from the suburbs had to head home on the metro. But wouldn't you know it, WMATA was not on any weekend schedule. It was Thursday, just another day for them. And the Metro was closed as we sauntered, tired down the escalator stairs. What a kick to the nuts that shit is. It took me an hour and half to decide to and finally catch a cab ride home. It was an early 4 A.M. by the time I sauntered upstairs and into my bed.

I woke up the next day at 8 A.M., my intestines insistent to expunge the waste in my bowels. It was not pleasant. I was hangover free but tired as all hell. I had nothing better to do so I drove to work in order to make photocopies. It was way too early for that shit. I spent a lot of the day working on putting together the last issue of this fine publication. But I didn't get a lot done. I took a nap in the afternoon. It didn't seem to help. I went out for dinner, came home and wrote some more and then slept again.

I woke up at 6 A.M. If you are keeping track of the dates you will realize that it is July 4th. The day of barbeques and fireworks. I am expected to

be social today and up until now I was looking forward to the planned outing. Now though my head aches from coffee and fucked up sleeping patterns. I did not sleep well last night at all. My back and body are killing me. I would take a muscle relaxer but that would make me useless and probably unable to make the party today. I tried to go have breakfast in hopes that would reinstitute some sense of the living, but instead I just feel worse now; not that happy, lightness that comes from non-sleep endurance.

I drove home listening to Milemarker. I drove past the adult video store that sits next to an overpass just off interstate 95. Stopped at the light I looked towards it's facade and in the windows, instead of the black cellophane that once shielded the public from it's tantalizing contents, are mannequins dressed proactively and sultry. Normally I find this amusing, the sex industry in my suburban town no longer resigned to darkness, instead flaunting it self to soccer moms and desperate husbands, the combined likes of which most likely make up it's customer base silently next to single dudes in their 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, I don't know, 60's even. But today, as the summer sun begins it's ascent into position to brutalize me with heat, I can't possibly be expected to cope with these images. How do I process the absurd when my mind literally wants to cut open my skull, jump from my head and bury itself in the ocean?

The noise interlude that proceeds Paint it Black's "White Kids Dying of Hunger" didn't help me out at all here. The howling guitar distortion rung through electrical circuits and pressed onto plastic compact discs hurt my tender ears and stab at my stupid brain like shish-kabob skewers through raw, fleshy meat. That's all my brain is now, just uncooked matter, more suitable for consumption the operation. No better to this world then the thousands of cattle mercilessly slaughtered day in and day out. This is going to be a long day, most certain to end in tears.

...and I knew who you were...

5.

Arrival time for the airport, courtesy of my mother, who is a champion worrying, was two hours and twenty minutes before my flight was scheduled to leave. This gave me a full two hours to sit and do nothing, an activity I've been engaging with increasing regularity. I felt anxious in the waiting area and this is because I had to board two planes that day and could not stop thinking about the time tested, age old fiery plane crash scenario. This one is filled with fantasies of me breaking the no cell phone rule and calling my loved ones. Not that I am sure this will work but it comforted me as I sat in the waiting area doing nothing.

Part of the reason I am doing nothing these days is because I am mostly content. That is to say I have very little that is weighing on my feeble mind. There are the irritations in my life, sure, the house, the bills, a boring job, not as much free time as I would like. All the common white, American male complaints. But I live a fairly humble, inconspicuous, easy life. Middle Class, educated, suburban life with all the simple, modern conveniences many people in my predicament take for granted.

Which is why, despite being on vacation and anxious to get where I am going and when my flight is delayed by not just two hours but twelve, I do not panic like the good Douglas Adams told me to. I go to my parents house, sleep on the air mattress my mother insists I sleep on instead of the couch. I watch cable TV and fall asleep.

5 A.M. I awake, dress and my father drives me back to Dulles International Airport. I catch my flight to Newark en route to Sin City, Nevada. I hate flying and two planes in one day is more than enough. When I finally settle into the second plane I order a rum and coke.

A brief aside about the NJ/NY skyline. It's ugly. It invades upon the pale gray sky. The city of New York and it's New Jersey suburbs across the poor abused Hudson are as unfortunate and dirty from the air as they are from the sky. Also when you see people who embody a cliché or stereotype you can only weep for humanity.

When I arrive at the Imperial Palace, center strip Las Vegas, I am greeted by a warm smile and a cold beer. This sets the stage for 72 hours of drinking and mostly only drinking. A typical vacation with my friend Mike.

Mike G., former boss, longtime friend, drinking companion, and stream of conscious story teller. When the alcohol comes pouring the words escape his mouth at an accelerated rate. This is all good though as I come from a family of hearty drinkers and speed talkers. Therefore I provide the perfect, attentive audience. We drink, we talk, we walk in the dry dessert heat, drinking. We stop to put a few dollars in slot machines where we don't win any money. We have no goals on this trip, only lofty destinations and the desire to drink and forget the real world for a few days. Even if unfulfilling but secure for now jobs, new and complicated lovers and hazy goals and aspirations hold tight on our minds and souls, we manage to drink and laugh.

This man, Mike G, I could say many many things about him and our long term and long distance friendship. It is a relationship that relies on the unspoken. That is we don't speak a lot. Sure there are emails and the occasional text and random phone call. We are both a couple of solitary individuals, thrown together in this narrative by a cash driven fate. And though we seem vastly different on the surface we are alike in the fundamental ways that bond people together. So we possess the ilk that allows us to share space repeatedly, replete with the needed mystery and unknowns that make people interesting.

A great deal of the mystery comes from living on opposite coasts. Our day to day trials are not shares in some unified narrative or experiences. We get them in pieces from each other via digital communication and the one or two times a year we are in the same city. So we fill in the blanks by what we know of each other. Like right now I know that Mike is asleep and has to work today. I can assume he went out to eat last night because he rarely has food in his fridge when I visit and I remember when he did live in Virginia he kept his fridge the same way. Possibly he watched a movie at home, he may have seen a lady. There is a good chance he will listen to some Howard Stern while he drives around the greater Seattle area and possibly listen to the Pixies as he just got tickets to their show in November.

You hope your long distance friends are healthy, happy people making a solid, comfortable life. You hope the companionship and lovers they find offer something nurturing and lasting. You hope that if it leads to heartbreak that they have some one good to drink some beers with. You hope this is someone looking out for them, someone who gives a shit enough about them to ensure they get home safe when they have inevitably had too much to drink. These types of relationships are filled with wonder and knowing what you know about these people, a lot of worry. Especially if you have a mother like mine.

What I will remember and retell here of my Vegas trip with Mike is the following:

1. Cold beer some how staying cold in the deep desert heat, at least long enough to be drunk.
2. The Epileptic like light show that thrashed my mind as I tried to find sleep in the curtain of booze I was trapped in.
3. The smell, or the absence of sent in the city. Oxygen kills everything I guess. It was really weird.
4. Tequila shots at 10:00 AM on Sunday morning. This led to me cashing out at about 7:00 PM.
5. The terrible feeling of parting. Vegas is a fun place to visit but Mike G is good person to hand out with more than anything. Leaving for Dixie on Monday afternoon sucks. I sucks even more when it lodges distance between you and one of the people you actually like on this planet.

So this was my drip, without the details, without the dirt. This is what you get. It's what I have to offer for public consumption, which as a writer is not that great a trait. Writers aren't suppose to keep secrets or excitement from their readers. The public demands the dish be served hot, exciting and tantalizing. And while this paragraph may accidentally allude to a greater mystery, that is not it's goal. This is just a story of two people and a brief telling of their time on earth. It is only unique in that it is shared by me, the author and Mike G. It's not a story set to end in tears, not like your other stories. There is no dramatic moment. It's just two people, bouncing along on a map with so many other people, all of them with their own stories. As I think about it now, it rejuvenates my soul in it's simplicity.



Graffiti - Adams Morgan, WDC

...I bought you the Clash...

6.

Last night Andrew Jackson Jihad and Delay came through town. They played with my favorite, active, local band in the Max Levine Ensemble.¹ To top it all off the show acted as a benefit for the establishment of a new radical/performance space as DC lost both the Bobby Fisher Memorial Building and the Brian McKenzie Info show in the last year. I didn't go to this show, a Tuesday evening offering in a basement taking place in a neighborhood I am unfamiliar with. As I get older the spaces the younger kids carve out for themselves gives me hope that independent music can survive and "radical" ideas can thrive. As DC is one of the most expensive cities to live in the United States these kids have a long way to go. But these types of shows, they don't feel like they were made for me. However, ten years ago a show like this was at the Black Cat. Maybe on the backstage but the bands of this caliber could take a crack at the establishment and reach a wider, more diverse audience.

This is why public spaces are so important. House shows are intimidating in their intimacy. The personal space of someone's house, filled with groups of friends gathered in the small social pockets that make up the larger community does not make a neutral space for outsiders like me. At any given basement show I am five to seven years older than the next oldest person. That's on a good day. This in part is the case because punkers get old, just like very one else. There lives changed and the time and energy to participate becomes harder to come by. It also has a lot to do with the fact that the spaces they carved out for themselves dissolved as the younger generation came in and emulated what they saw. So on the one hand it's really great, the culture survives, it's resiliency proves viable. On the other hand, it seems the lessons learned and the experiences had are lost and thus are recreated all over again, unnecessary failures in tact. The culture of punk rock is fractured. The iconic and legendary songs seem to permeate and get passed down from one jaded generation to the next. But even those

¹ Fuck you Ben Weasel. Also I don't know why I feel the need to qualify TMLE with this description. I just do. Please forgive me.

seem to fantastic and mythical. The failures, those stories that are most profound, seem to get buried.

Instead of seeing bands that I am really excited about I went to the corporate natural foods grocery store in my suburban safety net. Unexpectedly I ran into a friend of mine, a peer from my hay days of “the scene”. I still see him at shows from time to time, usually the one or two he helps book each year. Unlike me, he actually lives downtown and though his visit out to the burbs was tied to a family event, I was surprised none the less. Even five years ago I would have bet on his presence at this show. Without even talking to him in the time between shows I could anticipate his participation. But he was with a lady friend, shopping for some staples of any kitchen instead of rushing downtown to catch these bands.

I still want to be a part of punk rock, still contribute as an active participant and an excited fan. I still want to go to shows on weeknights. I want to feel comfortable in a strangers house around a bunch of kids half my age. Those the ways I met people who I still know and love today. My favorite shows were in those in taken and created spaces. When I am not feeling self conscious or irritable they are still my favorite shows. As time passes and familiar faces fade into the background I worry too that my own participation is weighing hard. The internet seems to allow me the last itchy finger to stick on the murky pulse of what’s going on, but it can’t replace the erratic heart rate of a sweaty live show, kids bouncing around, singing along with the band, sweat dripping from the ceiling, elbows being smooshed into rib cages. I shouldn’t rely on the kids to make these spaces, but I just don’t have the network in place anymore. I shouldn’t be so shy, so worried or so insecure. Punk rock saved my life. It means so much to me and I want to be a part of it for the rest of my life.

..."yea, this is going to last".

7.

Beth I hear you calling...

From "Beth" by Kiss.

This really is the worst way to start this story. It's not even funny or cute or remotely original. It's just the only way I can justify my experience on this planet is through the absurd and there is nothing more absurd then Kiss lyrics, especially those written by Peter Criss.

The story starts in earnest like this: I got lost this morning on 12th Street. I saw a familiar sign above a doorway. Etched into the concrete ark it read *The Post Office Pavilion*. I thought I could and should cut through the building to reach my destination. I was wrong this time as I was greeted by a metal detector and three rent-a-cops hamming it up in the peek hours of the work day. No thank you, not today I think. I entered back out onto the street and headed towards Pennsylvania Ave.

As I cross through Freedom Plaza I think about Beth. I liked Beth immediately when I first met her. I was just 22 years old then and that's somewhat significant to the story, but not the whole point. It is important though to put what happened into contest. During that summer Fugazi was touched by the Smithsonian powers that be to play on the National Mall as part of their Folklife Festival. I wanted to go to both the concert and the exhibits. I pulled out some of my courage from regions unknown and asked Beth if she would like to hang out and much to my surprise she agreed to meet me.

This date was the indirect result of two friendships I had coming to an end. I would find out years later from a mutual friend (present at said Fugazi show) that when one of the two ladies had stated at dinner one night her displeasure at the Smithsonian for excluding certain neighborhoods from DC my blasé reaction was less then awesome. In deed I stated strike absolution that I didn't care about the Smithsonian or any of that crap. I just wanted to see Fugazi. The truth was though, I was quite excited to hang out with Beth. I was too young to really articulate all of these complex amalgamates of nerves, insecurity,

politics and the like. Throw a free Fugazi show in the mix and what is a 22 year old kid to say.

So, I met Beth at the Smithsonian Metro stop that summer day. We took in the sites of Scotland, Tibet and Washington D.C. We watched chanting Monks and Tibetan folk dancing. Beth enjoyed a display on a Mason, the name of which escapes me now. We ate Ethiopian food, me for the first time.

The Post Office Pavilion is only important in this story because I had a headache. I was prone to allergies then, as I am now, and needed some Advil type medicine. The Pavilion is where we ended up before Fugazi. I remember that building only because of this day, though I dare say I have visited the tourist attraction on several other occasions. Afterwards Beth and I sat in Freedom Park and watched the skaters. I mentioned my fondness for this spot because I had a photo of my favorite skater, Sean Sheffy, doing an ollie over one of the gaps. Beth gave me an excited reaction. She knew of this Sean Sheffy and we started to talk about skateboarding much to my delighted surprise. My glee turned to unrestrained bliss when I mentioned that my favorite skate movie of all time was *The Search For Animal Chin*, to which Beth replied that she had not only seen it but owned a copy of the sacred film. When she asked me if I wanted to watch it with her after the show I nearly fell out. She was a fan of Mike McGill.

After the Fugazi show I gave two of my friends the slip (I was not very smooth at 22 and I fear at 32 I wouldn't be much different should the same scenario of a woman asking me if I wanted to watch *The Search For Animal Chin*) and walked with Beth to her apartment on Capitol Hill. We watched the movie on her couch. We followed it with dinner and a beer. Or maybe it was the other way around. I don't remember. All I know is I probably blew it that night, but she gave me another shot a few weeks later when we went to see *Cecil B Demented*.

Beth was then and still is an awesome person. When I first met her I was really young and didn't know how to talk to or act around women. I know now you just talk to them like anyone else and that women like confidence in a man. Ten years ago that didn't make any sense to me. In hind sight I know now what I might have done differently. Moving out of my parents house in the suburbs would have been a good first step.

To this day, I would have to say that day was the best date I have ever been on. It may not have been the start of some boiling hot romance, but I did get to spend time with a really cool person. And despite my obvious romantic failures and utter lack of confidence I learned quite a bit from that attempted courtship.

Unfortunately that day also created a lot of tension between myself and one of my friends I gave the slip to. It was a tension that would foreshadow the rest of our relationship over the next few years until it got all fucked up. In a way that date revealed a pattern of behavior I would adopt for many years. But all of that is entirely my fault. I was the one who was unable to qualify my feelings into words. This in turn just made me unjustifiably hostile and a sneaky bastard. I love my friends, but I am not a great communicator in any sense. And while I don't believe that any real tears were made that day, there is a certain sadness in all of this.

But I still look back on that day fondly. That's the real tragedy in all of this. Despite the faults, despite the emergence of really shitty behavior, despite offending, upsetting and ultimately alienating two friends I can't say I would have wanted any other day. It was one of those really good days, the kind of days you associate with old buildings in the Capitol City. It's a day that creates new landmarks in your lexicon, places that tell stories that no one else knows unless they ask. This is the beauty of life. Sometimes the cost is great, but you can't always quantify or appreciate that cost as you're spinning your days together into some bizarre narrative.

I turned the corner and crossed Freedom Plaza. I wished for a moment I could have caught Sean Sheffy launching one of his massive ollies over the stairs I ascended. As I crossed Pennsylvania Ave., I looked over my shoulder, the plaza quiet, waiting for something, anything, someone, anyone to sit and try and fall in love.



Assholeparade -Gainseville, FL

New Idea Society

I met Mike Law at Katy Otto's house. I've met a lot of people at Katy Otto's house. For many years she has been a conduit for a lot of the music I listened to. Mike Law however was one of those types of people I couldn't really forget. He was very polite and gentle and you felt when you talked he listened. He then played a bunch of songs in Katy's living room (Liza Kate and my Friend Kathy Cashel also played that night). Since then I've had the pleasure of seeing him play music a handful of time. He even played at show I put on called Hush Fest and wrote two songs specifically for the show.

His latest band, New Idea Society, played in Washington DC in June of 2009. As I saw him play a new batch of songs I was instantly mesmerized. On a Monday night, in front of no more than 20 people, New Idea Society played a set of music that was breathtaking. After looking at the photographs I took that night, I decided I wanted to interview Mike. The following took place over email.

KYS: My first question, what I've been thinking about in terms of New Idea Society is the transformations it's had since it's inception. The project started out as an outlet between you and Steve Brodsky to explore more traditional song writing and has now become a full fledged band with a fairly solid line up. As the consistent creative force how have you felt about all the changes?

MIKE LAW: Well it has all been very natural. We were roommates right as we moved out of our parents houses for the first time and moved to Boston. We both loved cassette 4trks and recorded in our apartment so it was only natural we would record together. I guess the thing is that the songs we released were always my songs so when I moved to NYC and he stayed in Boston it wasn't so strange to play without him. That being said I think we would both agree the tours we did together and the album we made was just a fantastic experience. I have more respect for Steve as a musician than almost anyone. He has also been one of the most caring and reliable friends I have ever had. Making a record with one of your best friends is really special. Our idea was to take these kind of standard songs and record them in an interesting way. I feel pretty good about how they came out seeing as we didn't even own a compressor or have any real knowledge of recording gear.

I suppose what you are getting at is that the band could have changed its name... I often think about that, but not for those reasons. I just never really liked the name that much. If I had known this would



become my main musical outlet I might have planned it more carefully. But as EULCID ended, NIS just became my main thing. Music just exists in your head at first anyway. The way in which it is applied to the world outside ones head is kind of arbitrary isn't it?

KYS: How have you managed to find an "identity" through all this change? Against a very fickle and fast changing climate, where being a musician is increasingly more difficult has it been hard to find an audience?

MIKE LAW: Well, once again these are things that I just don't think about. I never felt lacking of an identity. The audience I have had listening to the things I make has fluctuated and I am not sure I could really control it even if I did want to. I mean think about it. The first Violent Femmes album sold a million copies and their most recent one probably didn't sell a thousand. Most of us aren't making music for other people... I mean, I am just not interested in trying to control how someone thinks of my music or me. Some people probably think I am great, some people don't think I am any good and the overwhelming majority of people in the world don't know anything about me. The majority of the people in the world don't know who Elton John is! I never think about how people are going to hear something except when I sequence an album and even that is arbitrary these days as most people don't even listen to albums in order. I mean, I have recorded hundreds of songs for myself that I never had any intention of releasing. I mostly make things I want to hear and even when I sequence an album it is mostly for me, but that is one of the examples I can think of where I consider the listener. But... it is not in consideration of finding an audience. I realize 90% of finding an audience is being in the right place at the right time and I have only ever been where I was and I am not sure that was the right place.

KYS: As you moved from Eulcid to New Idea Society it seems that the lines got blurred a little bit. When I first heard *Hope: And Songs to Sing* I couldn't help but think of New Idea Society. How much of the similarities were coincidental and how much of the differences were intentional?

Mike Law: It took me a few minutes to even remember what the time line was on these. OK, by the time we finished *Hope: And Songs To Sing* I had already completed *You Are Awake Or Asleep*. I really don't remember comparing the two at all in my head. But I can say this much. A few of the songs on that EULCID album were never played live with the band and probably should have went toward some NIS project, probably not *The World Is Bright And Lonely* though. They wouldn't fit that. My thinking at the time was only about how to make the best EULCID album, the one that fit the theme and concept I was going for. "Checkbook", "(I Heard It) On the Radio", "Big Heart", and "Word Of Mouth" were all songs that I had written after EULCID played our last shows with Fugazi. I chose to include those songs and not to not include one other full band song because I thought it fit the album better. "The Peoples Grocery Company", which is partially inspired by Ida Wells, "Clip", and "The Cost of Profit" were my benchmarks for that album. These other songs told the rest of the story. I just really wanted an exciting album that wasn't difficult to hear after what seemed to me like a challenging listen of the first EULCID album, *The Wind Blew All The Fires Out*. So... the lines are always blurred in my head. I think that the application of a song to a certain name or project is kind of arbitrary.

KYS: I also wanted to ask about your more private output. As New Idea Society morphs and changes, you said you also have a lot of songs that never reach the public. Why is that? What is your editing process like?

MIKE LAW: I decided the best thing for me is not to edit what I create at home. If I do that I drive myself crazy wanting everything to be perfect, or a special song. I have found that if I let myself write as much as I feel like and record it to whatever quality I have time for I am much happier. Then, I find what songs I have ideas for that the entire band might be able to play in a unique way and go from there. For example on the new NIS album it was very important to me to try to create songs that will weave around multiple melodies and sounds. It was all about

how the songs were mutated. I was profoundly tired of playing chords. There is nothing on the new album with a strummed chord progression on guitar. I have had enough of that. As for what I record at home my rough count would be around 700 songs. I have slowed down a bit lately. I am getting tired of recording everything that comes in my head. I need a break from it sometimes.



KYS: You also played a lot of solo, acoustic shows, especially between *Are You Awake or Asleep* and *The World is Bright and Lonely*. I personally love acoustic music and the intimacy shows of that nature provide. Hush Fest being an extension of that enjoyment. I felt like those were an extension of your

music and songs that a lot of people don't get to see with the more lavish production of your albums. What I'm getting at I guess is how did that time period fit into what you wanted to do musically and artistically?

MIKE LAW: For whatever reason I hadn't put the band together... or it was in-between incarnations... or I thought playing solo was a good idea. I can't stand waiting around for people. I just didn't feel like I was a very compelling solo musician. I have been thinking about trying again, but I never found it that satisfying. I could watch Liza Kate everyday for a week, but I was bored of myself by the second song. I think that as long as our piano player Chris is focused on music I will want to work with him. He is great and inspiring with his focus.

KYS: You have written some songs that are very stream of consciousness. For me it's very unusual. I'm thinking mainly of "Part II: The World is Bright and Lonely" that sits in the middle of a lot of very catchy songs and a lot of very aggressive songs. Despite it's length

though, it's very engaging. How do songs like these come about? Are they approached the same way as your more straight forward songs?

MIKE LAW: Songs like that just happen. Later I put thought into which key it should be in and how it should be presented, but those songs are even less planned than others. They are moments where I am a conduit for something else, scarcely a participant really. That song came in the form of a 30 page poem that I wrote on my typewriter over the course of a few hours one night. Everyone tried to talk me out of putting it on the album because of its length (and that is the edited down version). I knew that it should be there if not only just for me. I recorded dozens of versions of it, but I think that one is close to where I wanted it to be. "Drawbridge Kid" is another one like that, it just happened in two parts and that was it. I started it in Japan on tour and finished it when I got back. "Waking Dreams and Rooms" was also one of those songs that just seemed to appear... I mean, they all just appear, but it takes me longer to sort through what those type of songs should be. It took me awhile to really figure out how to play "Part II" though.

KYS: Your lyrical diversity is also something I wanted to ask you about. Some songs like "dress shirt" or "(I heard it) on the radio" are fairly direct, but other songs are more abstract. In some cases I feel like you have a very free form style, Joyce and Ginsberg come to mind. But you counter those with some very blunt, personal stories as well. That's very rare. Most lyricists stick either with allegory or metaphor or are more or less literal, you seem to stretch out between the two extremes.

MIKE LAW: So by fairly direct you mean that they state things in a way that is not metaphorical or simply imagery? I think that "Dress Shirt" is somewhat allegorical although it does state things rather plainly, well, there are metaphors too... And when I think about "(I Heard It) On the Radio" there are metaphors and imagery used even though to me I agree that it is kind of straightforward. What I am trying to say by echoing those examples is that perhaps it is more of a scale and less a song being one thing or another. "Drawbridge Kid" is not straightforward, but the aforementioned ones are in comparison.

On "(I Heard It) On the Radio" I was making choices to try and be very, very, very clear what I was trying to say. Sometimes using a metaphor or imagery can make you feel more clear about something. Other times

it gets in the way. On that song I was specifically trying to think about war from the three perspectives that might be the most important, the bystander in the country doing the attacking, the soldier following orders, making the decision to press a button and drop a bomb, and the person whose house may be in the way of some political (that is code for financial) disagreement. It was stirred by a memory of being a pretty



young kid and listening to the DJ on a radio station say in a very sad voice that the U.S. had begun bombing Iraq during the first Gulf War. Everyone else I knew was happy and felt as though they were getting what they deserved. My family, town,

everyone I knew, felt that way, but I realized that something didn't add up, I just didn't know how to articulate it. The DJ only said a few sentences, he didn't make an anti-war statement, but he sounded sad and then played "The Killing Moon" by Echo and the Bunnymen. I knew what he meant. That was a powerful thing for him to do. It spoke to me more than a few anti-war sentences could have. I just really wanted to finish the thought for myself. I wanted to ask "When my body falls will it be worth its weight". NIS still plays that song live because I still want to know. I still want someone to explain to me that answer in a way I can understand because right now I cannot.

Recently I was thinking about the words to the new album which you haven't heard yet I don't think? I was a bit disappointed in myself that there was not as much imagery and exciting combinations of words as on the last record. But it was by design. I wanted everything more stark and lonely so I made the words that way too. The working title was called *Alone*. I wanted to really feel it in the songs so the words got kind of stark. I am actually having a difficult time trying to think of something that is really straightforward in any good music. It seems like most songs are more than a description of events without even

allegory. Maybe some old folk songs? I think for me it is a scale but not really extremes... Well, I guess "Don't Sleep" is pretty far to one end of the scale and even has some lyrics that I consider hokey. But I love to play that song and try to forget that when I sing them because I think they are worthwhile. Honestly, I could be wrong about the difference in the way the words are classified even though it is my own stuff. I don't have a lot of literary knowledge. I have read some books... but I don't have an understanding of classifications of these things.

KYS: Mostly what I want to talk about in terms of labels is where you see them fitting in regards to your music. I haven't quite framed it, but largely these days labels that had a real strong identity seem to be acting conservative, taking less chances and becoming less risky. I was listening to an interview today with Mary Timony and she was talking briefly about Matador and how after her solo records didn't sell that well she had to find another label. She said she didn't want to run her project like a business. So I guess what advantages does working with a label have these days as they become less risky? And I want to ask you this specifically because you said earlier that you largely create for your own satisfaction. But I also felt that your new music was reaching beyond just playing songs with friends. There felt to me like there was something bigger you wanted to convey. For me, your music with NIS felt more personal, what I heard felt like it came from somewhere more universal.

MIKE LAW: Labels really are the ones that decide where I fit in with them I suppose. It doesn't really matter what I think. If one does work with the right label they can potentially be very helpful and organize things for you in a way that many musicians (myself included) are not good at doing. OR... they can be just as useless. If you are asking about trying to become more well known most musicians that do are in the right place at the right time. Maybe 10% of them are so overwhelmingly talented it would be difficult to ignore them. Prince might have had a difficult time NOT getting popular.

Being friends with the people in the band is nice, but I am there to play music and so are they. I mean, it wouldn't really work if we were not friends but music is my only interest so they need to be focused and they are. I respect each of them for different reasons. What do you mean that there is something bigger that I want to convey? Bigger than

what? I am not sure what you mean by that. It is all NIS so I am not sure what you are referring to? Which songs felt more universal and which more personal.

KYS: In part I think it has to do with two things. One is your approach to the music. You said earlier you were tired of playing chords, so you are relying on playing scale progressions or even playing within single notes. It seems to have created a lot more space. I agree that chords can really seem stifling. I went back and listened to the Euclid records today and I was pulverized in a sense. They are very dense songs. But even some of the more straight forward songs are built on structure and that structure can be limiting, no matter how catchy it is.

The other part, for me, may just be my own reaction. Hearing the new songs I instantly thought of the Cure. I don't mean to say it sounded like The Cure, but that space created was reminiscent of *Disintegration* for example. It also reminded me of Ida. It was both intimate and yet opening. Breathless and stark and yet comforting. I wonder if this has to do both with your new approach and working with other people consistently over a period of time?

So what I mean when I say I feel you are trying to communicate something bigger, the music itself is more open, less confined. For me, as a listener, *The World is Bright and Lonely* is a very personal, singular perspective. The new music I heard just felt like it came from a desire to communicate something more abstract. It's hard to articulate this. Oddly enough this all relates to the music itself. Not having any recollection for the lyrics, I can't speak to that. This may all be a moot point in that regard.

MIKE LAW: OK, I think I understand what you are getting at now. *The World Is Bright and Lonely* was more centered around the lyrics. These new songs are in fact trying to say more without words thus making them more ambiguous and perhaps more universal...? Words mean something to everyone individually even though they don't mean the same thing to everyone. Music without words is even more undefinable and maybe even more universal as you said. *The World Is Bright and Lonely* could very well have been me and an acoustic guitar for many of the songs. The new album we just finished is trying to make a different kind of statement and spaciousness is a huge part of it. These would

sound like different songs if I played them on acoustic guitar. Since Chris is so good and Alan is such an unselfish drummer we can get away with all kinds of things that other bands cannot as far as space. No one in our band overplays. That is saying a lot. There is reserve on display at all times. In fact we are going into the studio next week and the newest of our songs are truly minimal. Even more than the ones you heard live. It is a complete antithesis of most of the EULCID stuff. EULCID was total chaos in my mind. It has more in common with Converge than New Idea Society at times. I don't even know how I



physically played and sang that stuff at the same time. That was a whole different thing. Someone told me once at a show in Chicago that we were like an evil three piece orchestra written by William S. Burroughs in cut up form. I agree, they are super dense to an extreme degree.

So yes, I am tired of the bulkiness of chords for the moment and I like all the space we have on these new songs. I don't know scales or music theory so I can't speak to if I am playing scales, but I am trying to have our three instruments that play notes, create the songs without guitar chords. I like letting those implied notes hang in the air.

So you think the new songs sound like The Cure... I mean Pink Floyd, I mean Brian Eno, I mean Joe Meek's space stuff?

KYS: With this new chapter in NIS, how do you want to present this next batch of work?

Mike LAW: I am interested in releasing these songs digitally and on vinyl. I enjoy listening to records so I assume other people might. I suppose I actually still prefer listening to things on CD more than MP3

because there is no debate that it sounds better, or closer to the original but I don't think that people like dealing with CDs anymore.

KYS: So are you optimistic about NIS future?

MIKE LAW: Well, I just arrived home from the studio. We have the basics done for four NIS songs. I also feel pretty good about a new song I was thinking about on the way home, so since it is only 1 AM I still have time to demo it on my 4trk before I go to sleep. In that sense I have no reason not to feel optimistic.



Reviews

If you want me to review your stuff send it to me at 6645 Coachleigh Way, Alexandria, VA 22315. I will send you a copy of the zine your review ends up in if you send me a return address. I also have a blog (foldskool.blogspot.com) where I review stuff. Some of these reviews can be read there. You don't have to send shit though.

Psyched to Die - Sterile Walls Grave Mistake/Firestarter Records

Grave Mistake put out one of my favorite old skool punk albums a few years ago with Set To Explode. I have to admit I haven't paid much attention to that label and that's pretty stupid because they've been putting out a steady diet of punk rock over the last few years. But all that has ended now with Psyched to Die's Sterile Walls. This 7 song EP is fricking awesome. It kind of reminds me of The Ergs in some places, but a little more OG LA punk influenced and a little more bratty. An awesome band. I feel like this release should have come with a sticker that I could slap on my skateboard. But I don't skateboard anymore so I guess it's okay.

Paul Baribeau/Your Heart Breaks - Split 7" Don't Stop Beleivin' Records

"Rolling Clouds" is pretty much a perfect song. This is Paul Baribeau's contribution to this split 7" with Your Heart Breaks. It is a very beautiful release. Black and White line drawings and the record is white vinyl. It feels almost sacrilegious to be pressing the needle against these beautiful grooves. This song is Paul Baribeau's magnum opus. It's gotta be three minutes at least and it's really sad and subdued. If this is the new direction his output is heading I am intrigued. The song is amazing as expected. The reverse side is Your Heart Breaks with "Torey Pines". It is a soft rocker with a little more instrumentation. It's reminiscent of early nineties pop. Sorta Vaseline's or Beat Happening-ish. The sleeve lists Kimya Dawson as a contributor. A nice poppy track. Comes with a digital download of two other Your Heart Breaks tunes.

Bomb the Music Industry/Laura Stevenson and the Cans split 7". Kiss of Death

This piece of wonder is from the awesome people at Kiss of Death. Bomb the Music Industry is perhaps one of the most consistent bands I have ever heard and they do not disappoint. Their original contribution "This is my Bailout" is pretty flippin awesome. Do they break new ground, no. Is it quality music like they always deliver? Fucking right. They also do a cover of Laura Stevenson's "A Shine To It" throwing her bedroom pop through their filter and making it a fun party song. It's got a bit of doo wop swing to it and I think an accordion as well as some bells. Stellar times as always. Laura Stevenson is not my cup of tea. It's not bad music by any stretch, but I can't really say it grabs me and that's a shame. She offers a version of BtMI's "It Ceases to be Whining if you're Still Shitting Blood." It could be your thing. It's just not mine, but I don't feel let down or anything.

Pizza/Tideland split 7".
Cosmic Debris

I think Mike Taylor (who plays in Pizza) put this out. It's pretty weird and not what I expected at all. Pizza reminds me of Sebedoh from back in the day. That Mike Taylor is in this band doesn't surprise me. Tideland is pretty noisy and somewhat a-Tonal and dirty sounding. Both bands are definitely paying homage to the grunge/Seattle/90's indie rock years. Sorta scary music, Tideland gives me the chills. Pizza just trips me out. It doesn't sound like Sebedoh I should clarify, it just reminds me of their weird records.



Meredith Bragg

Coke Bust - *Lines in the Sand*
Six Weeks Records

I pretty much bought this album because Coke Bust is playing a show I am going to on Friday. It's with Sick Fix, another DC/Baltimore Straight Edge band. This album doesn't really sound like anything other than a hardcore record. It sounds like the hard core albums from the 90's. It's cool people are still keeping the scene alive. This probably won't get a lot of spins. It's got some good moments, the guitar solos are a bit weird though. I'm still going to go to the show and have a lot of fun. But this album just kinda proves that hardcore shows are way better than hardcore records.

On Night Stand in North Dakota/Ghost Mice split 7" **Discount Horse Records**

One Night Stand in North Dakota (ONSIND) are from England. It's really stupid of me, but I've had this seven inch for a while and I just listened to the ONSIND side recently. That's a problem I have sometimes with split 7"s. ONSIND is an awesome band. This duo rules. Dudes like Tim Barry and Chuck Ragan have been making acoustic music, because the folk ideal is appealing. This is pretty much in that vein. It's reminiscent of Billy Bragg a little bit and not cause they are British. They don't really sound British too much. I mean I guess they sorta do. I don't want to take away from their musical heritage and culture and try to say this is Americana or anything. It's just really two awesome songs. Ghost Mice are amazing. I pretty much am in love with that band's music and the duo as people. They have a slew of new music on seven inches. Though I think a new album would be awesome I'm also psyched at all the new music. This seven inch is pretty much awesome. Chris writes a lot of songs, he even put out a solo album last year. But Ghost Mice is distinguishable from that stuff. It's a little more upbeat and well of course there is Hanah's voice and violin playing. Also this is probably some of their best recorded material. Uplifting, inspiring and revolutionary.

Tacocat/Ghost Mice Split 7" **Plan-It-X**

This is the second of two recent Ghost Mice releases. On the A-Side is a new band called Taco Cat. They are some sweet bubble gum punkers. They sound like they are pretty young, but definitely not unsure. They have a real loose feeling to them and actually remind me of Bikini Kill if they were a little more reigned in. Of course for me it's always the Ghost Mice side. On their last tour (see *Korrupt Yr Self issue #2*) they played this song "Laziness is next to Evilness" every night. It's definitely their new anthem that kids will be singing along with their next time through. "Tick Tock" has their most intricate into, with some awesome accordion accompaniment courtesy of Matty Pop Chart. The whole thing ends with my new favorite song "New Moon Rising" where Hannah's vocals take center stage. You should definitely pick these up.

Assholeparade - Welcome Fucking Home - 7" **No Idea**

When the name of your band is Assholeparade you pretty much have to be awesome or no one is going to take you seriously. Considering this band has been performing since 1995 it's pretty much a given that they are. Apparently they haven't been the most consistently active band, but when they are it's pretty much awesome. This is seven songs of loud, fast, short thrash. It's one of those records that you pretty much have to be into loud fast music to like. Definitely not something to get into when you've got a headache. Members are also in Religious as Fuck and Dead Friends who are two bands that I think are awesome.

Sick Fix - Tour 2009 - CDR **Self Released**

This band absolutely slayed it live on their recent home coming show (where I picked up a bunch of records, some of which are reviewed in this zine). Honestly most hardcore sounds the same and lacks an element of musical prowess. It's generally repetitious and

tedious. But not Sick Fix. Time changes are key, but so is adding layers to your songs. So this demo, if you were smart enough to get it should tied you over until a proper album finally comes out. Sounds like it was laid down on a four track. Can't wait to hear this band captured in a proper studio to really present that heavy sound.

V/A - Fuck Detroit This is Grand Rapids - 7" **Punks Before Profits Records**

A dude at a show was running a distro and when I pulled this record out to read it he was all too enthusiastic to sell me on it. So I decided I would pick it up. Being a snobbish prick from DC I don't really think about the Detroit punk scene, let alone Grand Rapids. But it truly is these lesser known scenes that keep true punk alive. I mean DC still has a good, tight nit scene, but if it weren't for kids everywhere doing stuff, well you'd never get to see anything new. So this comp is eight bands recorded in one day all from Grand Rapids. They really don't like god in Grand Rapids. Some of the bands are called Jesus Crisis and Religious SS Disorder. There are songs called "Fuck God" and "Fuck Christian Sympathy". It's a lot of loud, thrashed out punk rock and old skool hardcore. Breakdowns abound. Grand Rapids is keeping it real. Also includes a track by Positive Noise and their angry skate rock hard core.



Resister - North Carolina

Dead Friends - Self Titled CD **Plan-It-X**

I was only going to review analog releases in this zine. And then I got this CD in the mail and figured all bets were off. This CD is an absolute gem of an album. I've covered a good smattering of hardcore and punk in this review section, but none of it compares to Dead Friends self titled debut. This shit has bite, tenacity, musicianship, catchiness everything. All those great, fucked up Nirvana songs you heard growing up, cut those in half and speed

them up, add some blast beats for good measure and you have a slight idea of what Dead Friends is all about. It is so rare that an album like this can emerge. Plan-It-X does it again. Get this!

The Catalyst - Swallow Your Teeth
The Perpetual Motion Machine

It has been about two years since I last saw The Catalyst and man a lot has happened for the is hyper skuzzy rock ass kick from the good old city of Richmond, VA. I don't know what it is about that city man, but it is turning out some fantastic music. Maybe they don't put fluoride in the water or something. I don't know. What I do know is that The Catalyst have grown from a fuzz powered grunge influenced chaotic punk band to a full fledged, grimy, post punk powerhouse in the span of two years. Everything on this album just seems much more violent and angry and crushing, but it's also a lot more fluid and clear. And despite the requisite nods to some other Virginia heavy's like City of Caterpillar or Majority Rule, The Catalyst have out grown the shadows of the former bands. Growing up in Virginia and watching the scene grow it's great to have a band like The Catalyst emerge and shred some triumphant jams. It also doesn't hurt that the cover art on the new album is a totally fucking basket case looking ordeal. In a music world where the physical product is going bye bye, when a band has some good art work to accompany the music it becomes an iron reminder of why something just should not die. Anyway, if you are at all interested in distorted guitars, dudes yelling and some spacey jams you need to pick this up. It's a perfect pallet complement to the Dead Friends CD you just read about. Try not to fuck this up kids.



Antlers - Richmond, VA

Ten Questions With:

Ryan Berkley of Berkley Illustrations

We ask many people the same questions. You get to read them.



1. Where are you? Eliot Hall, room 221, Reed College, Portland, Oregon ,US, Earth. Soon to be home.
2. How's Life? Life is going a mile a minute with no breaks or brakes. In a super-positive way, though.
3. What do you do? I draw until my hand hurts and until I am satisfied, then I draw some more. It will never end.
4. How did you get started? I owe everything to my wife,
Lucy. She is my gasoline, my batteries, and my solar panels.
5. What do you like? I really like my new hi-def TV, but I don't really get a lot of time to enjoy it.
6. What do you think should happen? I think my house needs to be cleaned.
7. What needs to stop? Slaughterhouses.
8. What are you reading? The Goon, book #7.
9. What are you listening to? Miracle Fortress.
10. Where are you going? To visit you, dude!

Ryan's work can be viewed and purchased at:
www.letsshare.typepad.com and www.berkleyillustration.etsy.com



Gull - Richmond, VA

CODA:

I totally missed out on a show that my friend Hannah from Ghost Mice played. I was feeling tired, anxious, freaked out and old. And it ended up I had something to write about. And I won't take back a word of it. I still feel that way, to an amazing degree. Punk rock was about outsiders, but I am pretty much outside of the outsiders. I've gotten older.

But that's all on me in a large way too. I don't know why I feel less connected to punk rock now then I did when I was young. Maybe because my experiences are now way more singular, isolated to me. Obviously there are other kids in the rooms and halls that I find. But I don't hang out with anyone and go to shows anymore.

But the music is still so central to my life. It fucking has to happen and it has to happen the way it does, in churches, basements, houses, under bridges, in living rooms. We have to create in the spaces we can find and the spaces we can make. And I have to remember that if I can find out about it I am welcome. Sure I might be the weird old dude with the camera that no one seems to know, but that's okay.

I can be the exception to the rule. You don't have to grow up and grow out of what you love doing. You don't have to be defined by your cell phone bill and your asshole boss's infantile demands. I can do the things I love, no matter what anyone tells me. I never wanted to grow up, and I don't have much intentions of starting now. Most of the grown ups I know are fucking boring. And they are people that are my age.

I'm still going to listen to loud music, fast music, impassioned and totally pissed off music. I'm gonna spend as much money on records and CD's and shit as I possibly can. I am going to shoot your band with my camera if you put yourself in front of me. I am going to make a fucking contribution to the world I love and care about. I fucking dare you to stop me.

There is hope. And believe me I haven't felt that way for a while. But there is hope. You just have to remember who you are and never let anyone take that away from you. I have to remember that myself. If I can do that, I'll be okay.



Voyage in Coma - WDC

To:

Korrupt Yr Self
6545 Coachleigh Way
Alexandria, VA 22315

Dear Postal Service Worker, thank you for delivering this zine to the intended recipient. I greatly appreciate it and hope that I can continue to support the mail carrying profession by continuing to send these to more and more people. I hope you are having a good day.